

At one time Connecticut was the leading state in the country for providing services to gifted and talented students. Almost every district had a broad range of services for students with high potential (including those from low income groups) and our work was so well recognized that we regularly entertained visitors from around the country and numerous overseas nations. Due to cutbacks in funding and leadership at the state level very few districts are now making provisions for the young people who will become the future inventors, creative designers, engineers, innovative leaders, entrepreneurs, writers, and people who will make a difference in the economy of our state and the nation. It is embarrassing that a state that is arguably one of the most prosperous in the country has let what was the “jewel in the crown” of our education system decline to such a low level. Providing services for these students is an investment rather than an expense and I, along with all of my colleagues at the University of Connecticut, urge the legislature to restore support for this segment of our school population.

Dr. Leon Lederman, the Nobel Prize winning physicist, recently said, “Once upon a time, America sheltered an Einstein, went to the Moon, and gave the world the laser, electronic computer, nylon stockings, television, and the cure for polio. Today we are in the process, albeit unwittingly, of abandoning this leadership role.” Every school and classroom in Connecticut has in it young people who are capable of continuing this remarkable tradition. But the tradition will not survive without a resolve on the part of our legislators to invest in developing the talent potentials of *all* of our young people. Other nations around the world have realized that highly intelligent and creative human capital is the key to their economic, social, and cultural advancement. We are committing economic recklessness if we do not do the same.

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